



# Arkansas Waterways Commission

Mike Beebe, Governor

Gene Higginbotham, Executive Director

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Contact:

Katie McManners, Public Information Specialist  
Arkansas Waterways Commission  
(501) 682-3427  
[katherine.mcmanners@arkansas.gov](mailto:katherine.mcmanners@arkansas.gov)

## New Grant Provides Funding for Arkansas Public Port Development

**LITTLE ROCK, AR (May 12, 2014):** Public ports and intermodal facilities in Arkansas will benefit the state's economy through a new grant program of the Arkansas Waterways Commission. The Arkansas Port, Intermodal, and Waterway Development Grant provides funds for public ports and intermodal authorities to make capital improvement projects and for dredging projects. The grant program is designed to increase Arkansas' ability to be competitive in the global economy.

"Through this grant, the Arkansas Legislature has given ports and intermodal facilities a great tool to continue growing Arkansas' economy," says Gene Higginbotham, Executive Director. "Arkansas is third in the nation in river miles, an economic opportunity that we are not fully utilizing. By funding new and existing critical infrastructure at our public ports and intermodal facilities, Arkansas provides jobs, and competitive transportation costs for moving cargo."

The deadline for applications is June 1, 2014 and grants will be awarded in November 2014. Eligible projects include capital improvements at ports, and intermodal facilities with a maritime use. Dredging projects are also eligible. A 10% match is required for capital improvements and a 50% match is required for dredging projects.

"This grant will use funding from an existing ad valorem tax," says Higginbotham. "The grant will benefit the same entities that pay the tax." This tax is levied annually on waterways users and is based on the value of the cargo carried by that user.

The grant was established by Act 1483 of the 89<sup>th</sup> General Assembly. A copy of the grant rules and application can be obtained in the news section of the Commission's website, [waterways.arkansas.gov](http://waterways.arkansas.gov), or by calling (501) 682-1173.

The Arkansas Waterways Commission is the sole state agency responsible for developing, promoting and protecting waterborne transportation in Arkansas. The Commission also promotes economic development for ports on the five commercially navigable rivers of the state: the Arkansas, Mississippi, Ouachita, Red and White Rivers.

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